

A SCRIPTURAL INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Book Four

SALVATION

What It Is, How It Is Received, How It Is Kept, and How It Must Be Taught

*"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you
in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,
and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."*

Acts 2:38

Established Upon the Authority of Holy Scripture

King James Version

Preface: The Weight of This Doctrine

No doctrine demands greater precision than salvation. A miscalculation in theology produces theological error. A miscalculation in the doctrine of salvation misdirects souls. The teacher who gets this wrong does not merely produce confused students; he produces people who believe they are saved when they may not be, or people who give up pursuing what God has promised because they have been told they already possess it. Either outcome is a catastrophe of eternal proportion.

This book is the most important in the series. Everything in Books One through Three has been preparation for this question: what must a person do to be saved? The method of Book One guards us from building on insufficient evidence. The doctrine of Book Two establishes who it is we are being saved by. The doctrine of Book Three establishes why we need saving

at all. Now the question that drives the entire gospel comes forward: given what sin has done, given who Jesus Christ is, given the grace God has freely provided — what does a person actually do?

The answer is Acts 2:38. Not as a magical formula. Not as one option among several. As the apostolic pattern — the only place in the entire New Testament where sinners ask directly what must be done to be saved and receive a complete, direct answer from a Spirit-filled apostle.

This book will proceed through eleven chapters:

- Chapter One: The scene at Pentecost — the question, the questioners, and the answer.
- Chapter Two: Element One — Repentance. What it is, what it is not, and why it must come first.
- Chapter Three: Element Two — Baptism in Jesus' Name. Nine witnesses across four authors establishing its necessity and its meaning.
- Chapter Four: The Greek word *eis* — the preposition that determines whether baptism is for or because of remission of sins.
- Chapter Five: Element Three — The Gift of the Holy Ghost. Its necessity, its evidence, and every New Testament instance of its reception.
- Chapter Six: Calling on the Name of the Lord — where and how this is performed in Scripture.
- Chapter Seven: Keeping Salvation — on apostasy, endurance, and the security of the believer.
- Chapter Eight: Pastoral Guardrails — how salvation must and must not be taught.
- Chapter Nine: Objections Examined — exegetical responses to the most frequently raised challenges to the apostolic salvation pattern.
- Chapter Ten: Key Terms and Technical Reference — Greek and Hebrew vocabulary used throughout the book.
- Chapter Eleven: Study Guide and Review Questions for individual study, small group discussion, or classroom instruction.

A Solemn Note

The stakes of this chapter are eternal. Read it carefully. Test every claim against Scripture. Do not accept it because it is written here. Accept it because the whole counsel of God, assembled across multiple witnesses and multiple authors, points in one direction. That is the standard of this series, and it applies here above all.

Chapter One: The Scene at Pentecost

To read Acts 2:38 correctly, you must first read Acts 2. The verse does not exist in isolation. It is the answer to a specific question, asked by specific people, in a specific moment of profound spiritual awakening. The context is not incidental; it is essential.

1.1 The Day of Pentecost

Acts 2:1--4

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Fifty days after Passover — fifty days after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ — the promise of the Father was fulfilled. The Holy Ghost, promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; Acts 1:4-5), poured out upon 120 disciples in the upper room with audible and visible signs: the sound of a rushing wind, tongues of fire, and the disciples speaking in languages they had not learned.

The city heard. Jerusalem was crowded with Jewish pilgrims from across the Roman world, gathered for the feast. When the sound came, a multitude assembled. They heard the disciples speaking in their own native languages — Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, Arabia (Acts 2:9-11) — all hearing the praises of God in their mother tongue. The crowd was amazed and bewildered. Some mocked.

1.2 Peter's Sermon

Peter stood with the eleven and addressed the crowd. His sermon is the inaugural proclamation of the New Covenant gospel to the world. It covers:

- The explanation of what they are witnessing — the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:14-21)
- The declaration of Jesus of Nazareth: his miracles, his crucifixion by their hands, his resurrection confirmed by Scripture (Psalm 16:8-11; Psalm 110:1), and his exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 2:22-35)
- The climactic conclusion: 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ' (Acts 2:36) The sermon is not primarily an invitation. It is a declaration. Peter is not asking the crowd to consider a lifestyle option. He is declaring the most important fact in human history and placing its weight squarely on the conscience of every person present.

1.3 The Question That Changes Everything

Acts 2:37

*"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart,
and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and
brethren, what shall we do?"*

This is the pivotal moment. The crowd has been 'pricked in their heart' — the Greek word *katanyssomai* (κατανύσσομαι) means to be pierced, stabbed

through, stricken. It is not mild conviction; it is the sharp, inescapable awareness of guilt. These are the people who, weeks earlier, had called for the crucifixion of Jesus. Now they understand who he was.

The weight of that realization is crushing.

Their question is not philosophical or theoretical. It is desperate: 'what shall we do?' This is the most important question a human being can ask. And it receives the most important answer in the New Testament.

Notice what the question is NOT. They do not ask: 'What must we believe?' or 'How do we feel sorry enough?' or 'What prayer should we pray?' They ask what they must DO. Peter answers in kind with specific, concrete instructions that require specific, concrete obedience.

1.4 The Answer: Acts 2:38

Acts 2:38

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

This verse is the doctrinal cornerstone of this entire series. It is the only place in the New Testament where convicted sinners ask directly what they must do to be saved and receive a complete, unambiguous, apostolic answer. Three elements. One package. All of them necessary.

The Foundation of the Gospel

Acts 2:38 is not one verse among several equal alternatives. It is the direct apostolic answer to the direct sinner's question. Lay it as your foundation and every other Scripture on salvation will align with it. Depart from it and the Scriptures on salvation will appear to contradict each other, because you are reading each one in isolation from the whole.

Verse 39 extends the promise without limit: 'For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' This is not a promise for the first-century Jewish audience alone. It is the promise for every human being, of every generation, whom God calls. The terms do not change. The promise does not expire.

Chapter Two: Element One — Repentance

Peter's first word is 'Repent.' This is not accidental. Repentance is the gateway through which every element of the salvation transaction must pass. Without genuine repentance, baptism in Jesus' name becomes an empty ritual and the gift of the Holy Ghost is not given. Repentance is the prerequisite that makes everything else meaningful.

2.1 What Repentance Is

The Greek word translated 'repent' in Acts 2:38 is *metanoeo* (μετανοέω), from *meta* (change, after) and *nous* (mind). Literally: to change one's mind. But in the New Testament's usage, *metanoia* is far more than an intellectual revision. It is a complete reorientation of the whole person — mind, will, affections, and direction of life — away from sin and toward God.

Repentance has three inseparable components:

- Intellectual: the mind recognizes and agrees with God's verdict that what was done was wrong. Not excused, not minimized, not blamed on circumstances. Wrong.
- Emotional: genuine grief and sorrow over sin — not merely regret for consequences, but sorrow for the offense against God himself. Paul calls this 'godly sorrow' in 2 Corinthians 7:10.
- Volitional: a decisive turning. The will turns away from sin and toward God. Without this third element, the first two are incomplete. Sorrow without turning is remorse. Repentance is the turn.

2 Corinthians 7:10

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

Paul distinguishes two kinds of sorrow: godly sorrow (lype kata theon — sorrow according to God, sorrow that takes God's perspective on sin) and worldly sorrow (lype tou kosmou — sorrow that merely regrets the pain and embarrassment sin causes). Only godly sorrow produces genuine repentance. The person who is sorry only because they got caught, or because sin made them feel bad, has not yet repented. The person whose sorrow is oriented toward God — 'I have offended a holy God who loves me' — has arrived at the threshold of genuine repentance.

2.2 The Witness Count on Repentance

Repentance is not Peter's invention. The two-or-three witness standard of Book One demands that every doctrinal claim be confirmed across multiple authors and contexts. The witness count on repentance as the entry point of salvation is not two or three. It is the sustained testimony of the entire New Testament proclamation.

Witness 1 — Matthew 3:2

(John the Baptist): "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John preached repentance as the prerequisite for all that followed.

Witness 2 — Matthew 4:17

(Jesus Christ): "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The first word of Christ's public ministry.

Witness 3 — Luke 24:47

(The risen Lord's commission): "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Witness 4 — Acts 3:19

(Peter's second sermon): "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Peter again leads with repentance.

Witness 5 — Acts 17:30

(Paul at Athens): "God... commandeth all men every where to repent." Universal, without exception.

Witness 6 — Acts 20:21

(Paul's summary of his ministry): "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Witness 7 — Hebrews 6:1

(The first principles of the doctrine of Christ): "Repentance from dead works" is listed first among the foundational doctrines.

Seven witnesses, spanning John the Baptist, Jesus himself, Peter, Paul, and the author of Hebrews. The standard is not merely met — it is exceeded. Repentance is the incontrovertible, universal entry point of New Covenant salvation.

2.3 What Repentance Is Not

Repentance Is Not Merely Feeling Sorry

Judas Iscariot felt sorry after betraying Jesus. He returned the thirty pieces of silver and declared, 'I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood' (Matthew 27:4). He went and hanged himself. He had remorse. He did not have repentance. The difference is the turn: genuine repentance produces a turning toward God; remorse may produce only despair.

Repentance Is Not a One-Time Emotional Event

Repentance at conversion is the beginning of a life of repentance. The believer who continues to walk with God will continue to be convicted by the Holy Spirit, continue to turn from areas of remaining sin, and continue to grow in holiness. The initial repentance of Acts 2:38 is the decisive turn; the ongoing repentance of the Christian life is the sustained direction of travel.

Repentance Is Not Penance

Penance is the performance of prescribed acts to earn forgiveness — a system with no New Testament warrant. Repentance is a change of heart and direction, not the accumulation of religious merit. The God who sees the penitent heart does not require further payment; the cross has already paid what penance could never afford.

Repentance Does Not Precede Conviction

The order in Acts 2 is significant: the crowd was convicted first ('pricked in their heart,' verse 37), and then they asked what to do (verse 37), and then Peter commanded repentance (verse 38). Repentance is the response to conviction, not the cause of it. The Holy Spirit convicts (John 16:8); the sinner responds by repenting. This is also why the gospel must be preached — conviction comes through the Word (Romans 10:14-17).

2.4 Repentance and Faith

The relationship between repentance and faith is not a competition. Some theological traditions present repentance and faith as sequential (repent, then believe) or as simultaneous (they occur together). The New Testament presents them as two sides of a single reality: the genuine turning away from sin (repentance) is inseparable from the genuine turning toward Christ (faith). You cannot have one without the other. A person who claims to believe in Christ while remaining unrepentant has not genuinely believed; he has merely assented to a proposition.

Acts 20:21

"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul's summary of his entire preaching ministry: repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ. The two are named together as a unit, not as a sequence. They are the inward double movement of conversion: away from sin and self, toward God and Christ.

Chapter Three: Element Two — Baptism in the Name of Jesus Christ

Water baptism in Jesus' name for the remission of sins is the most contested element of Acts 2:38 in modern Christianity. It is therefore the element that requires the most careful, most thorough, and most patient witness construction. This chapter builds that case from nine independent witnesses spanning four authors and every major strand of New Testament literature.

3.1 The Nine Witnesses

The two-or-three witness standard is the floor for establishing doctrine. What follows exceeds it threefold. Each witness is drawn from a different author, a different book, a different occasion, and a different genre.

Witness 1 — Acts 22:16

(Luke, recording Paul's own testimony): "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Paul's own account of his conversion, given years after the event, still connects baptism directly to the washing away of sins.

Witness 2 — 1 Peter 3:21

(Peter — an independent apostolic voice): "Baptism doth also now save us... by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Peter does not say baptism is a symbol of salvation already received. He says it saves.

Witness 3 — Mark 16:16

(The Gospel record): "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Christ's own words: belief and baptism together lead to salvation.

Witness 4 — Titus 3:5

(Paul): "He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The washing (baptism) and the Spirit are jointly named as the mechanism of salvation.

Witness 5 — Colossians 2:12

(Paul): "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God." Baptism is the burial and resurrection with Christ.

Witness 6 — Romans 6:3--4

(Paul): "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are

buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Witness 7 — Galatians 3:27

(Paul): "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." To be baptized into Christ is to clothe yourself in him — not to declare an allegiance, but to enter a union.

Witness 8 — John 3:5

(Christ himself): "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The water birth and the Spirit birth are jointly necessary for entrance into the Kingdom.

Witness 9 — 1 Corinthians 6:11

(Paul): "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The washing — in the name of Jesus, by the Spirit — is named as the moment of sanctification and justification.

Nine witnesses. Four authors: Luke, Peter, Paul, and Christ himself.

Gospels, Acts, and Epistles. Spanning decades of New Testament composition. The two-or-three witness standard is not barely met; it is exceeded three times over. No minister who takes the doctrinal method of Book One seriously can dismiss the salvific role of baptism on the basis of a single verse addressed to already-baptized believers.

The Weight of the Evidence

Any one of these nine passages, read in isolation, might be argued around. Read together, they form a doctrinal wall. The

minister who dismisses baptism's necessity on the basis of Ephesians 2:8-9 — a single verse — is doing precisely what Chapter One of this series forbids: building against the testimony of multiple witnesses on the authority of one.

3.2 Baptism in Jesus' Name: The Apostolic Record

Every baptism recorded in the book of Acts was administered in the name of Jesus Christ — not in the titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost as a formula, but specifically in the name of Jesus:

- Acts 2:38 — 'in the name of Jesus Christ'
- Acts 8:16 — 'in the name of the Lord Jesus'
- Acts 10:48 — 'in the name of the Lord'
- Acts 19:5 — 'in the name of the Lord Jesus' This is the uniform apostolic pattern. The apostles who received the Great Commission directly from Christ (Matthew 28:19) executed it consistently in the name of Jesus. This is not coincidence. It is not an error. It is apostolic interpretation of Christ's command. The singular 'name' of Matthew 28:19 — not 'names' — is the name of Jesus Christ, in whom the fullness of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost dwells (Colossians 2:9; as established in Book Two).

3.3 What Baptism Does

The New Testament uses four distinct images to describe what happens at baptism in Jesus' name. Together they form a comprehensive portrait of the most significant moment in the believer's life:

Burial and Resurrection

Romans 6:3--4

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised

up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Baptism is the believer's participation in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. The old self — the sinful nature, the life lived under condemnation — is buried with Christ. The new self rises with him. This is why the mode of baptism is immersion: you cannot bury someone by sprinkling. The imagery of Romans 6 demands going down into the water (burial) and coming up out of it (resurrection).

Washing Away of Sins

Acts 22:16

"Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Baptism is the appointed moment of the washing away of sins — not a symbol of cleansing that has already occurred, but the covenant action through which the blood of Jesus Christ, applied to the repentant believer, removes the guilt of sin. This language deliberately echoes the Old Testament's washings and purifications — but with a decisive difference: those washings covered. This one removes.

Putting on Christ

Galatians 3:27

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

The image is of clothing — the new identity of the believer is Christ himself. To be baptized into Christ is to take on his identity, his standing before God, his righteousness. The believer who comes up from the baptismal waters does not come up merely wet; he comes up clothed in Christ.

The Answer of a Good Conscience

1 Peter 3:21

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Peter clarifies what the saving work of baptism is not: it is not the removal of physical dirt. It is 'the answer of a good conscience toward God' (Greek: eperotema — an appeal, a pledge, a formal response).

Baptism is the moment of the sinner's formal covenantal response to God — the pledge of a conscience that has been convicted, repented, and now makes its appeal to God through the name of Jesus Christ.

Chapter Four: The Greek Word Eis — For or Because Of?

The single most common grammatical objection to the salvific reading of Acts 2:38 concerns the Greek preposition eis (εἰς), translated 'for' in the phrase 'baptized... for the remission of sins.' This chapter addresses that objection directly, thoroughly, and from the grammar itself.

4.1 The Objection Stated

OBJECTION:

"The Greek word eis in Acts 2:38 can mean 'because of' or 'in view of.' So 'baptized for the remission of sins' means baptized BECAUSE sins have already been remitted — not in order to receive remission. Baptism is therefore a symbol of salvation already received, not a means of receiving it."

This is the most sophisticated grammatical objection to Acts 2:38 and deserves a serious, thorough answer. It is typically presented with a

supporting parallel: Matthew 12:41, where the men of Nineveh 'repented at (eis) the preaching of Jonah' — meaning they repented in response to, not in order to produce, Jonah's preaching. The argument is that eis can point backward to a cause rather than forward to a purpose.

4.2 The Grammatical Answer

The Greek preposition eis is one of the most common prepositions in the New Testament, occurring over 1,700 times. Its dominant, standard meaning is forward-pointing: into, unto, for the purpose of, in order to achieve. The claim that eis in Acts 2:38 means 'because of' requires it to be used in a rare, secondary sense that runs against the overwhelming preponderance of its New Testament usage.

How Eis Is Actually Used in Acts 2:38

Acts 2:38 uses eis twice in the same verse. The second use is unambiguous: 'ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' The gift of the Holy Ghost has not been received before Peter speaks. His command is: do these things IN ORDER TO receive it. The eis that points toward the gift of the Holy Ghost is prospective — pointing forward to something not yet received. It is grammatically inconsistent to read the first eis as retrospective (because of sins already forgiven) while reading the context as prospective (in order to receive the Holy Ghost not yet given).

The Matthew 26:28 Parallel

The most decisive parallel in the New Testament is not Matthew 12:41 (the Nineveh argument) but Matthew 26:28, where Jesus, instituting the Lord's Supper, says of his blood: 'which is shed for many for (eis) the remission of sins.' The exact same construction: eis aphesin hamartion.

No one argues that Christ's blood was shed BECAUSE sins had already been remitted. The blood was shed IN ORDER TO remit sins. The eis in Matthew 26:28 is universally read as purposive (forward-pointing). The identical Greek construction in Acts 2:38 must be read the same way.

The Grammar Decides

Eis aphesin hamartion appears in both Matthew 26:28 (Christ's blood shed for the remission of sins) and Acts 2:38 (baptized for the remission of sins). If eis means 'in order to achieve' in Matthew 26:28 — and no one disputes that it does — it means the same in Acts 2:38. The construction is identical. The grammar demands consistency.

The Matthew 12:41 Parallel Examined

The Nineveh parallel (Matthew 12:41: 'they repented at the preaching of Jonah') does use eis with a retrospective flavor — the repentance was in response to the preaching. But notice what this parallel actually shows: even if eis can occasionally point backward in response to something, it does not follow that it DOES so in Acts 2:38. The normal, dominant sense of eis is purposive. To invoke a rare secondary usage in Acts 2:38 requires a specific grammatical or contextual reason — and no such reason exists. The text gives every indication that the standard, forward-pointing sense is intended.

The Context Confirms the Forward-Pointing Reading

Peter is not addressing people who have already had their sins remitted.

He is addressing people who are 'pricked in their heart' (verse 37) and desperately asking what they must do (verse 37). They have not yet done anything. They are not yet saved. They are standing in the moment before salvation, asking how to enter it. Peter gives them three prospective commands: repent (something not yet done), be baptized (something not yet done), and ye SHALL receive (future tense) the Holy Ghost.

Everything in the text points forward. The eis points forward. The baptism is for the purpose of receiving what they do not yet possess.

Chapter Five: Element Three — The Gift of the Holy Ghost

The third element of Acts 2:38 is the gift of the Holy Ghost. Of the three elements, this is the one most frequently treated as optional, assumed, or already possessed by any sincere believer. Scripture teaches otherwise. The reception of the Holy Ghost is a distinct, necessary, observable transaction — not an invisible sentiment, not a feeling of peace, not a general awareness of God's presence. It is the Spirit of the living God taking up residence in a human vessel, with evidence.

5.1 The Necessity of the Holy Ghost

John 3:5

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Christ's words could not be more explicit. Birth of water and birth of the Spirit are both required for entrance into the Kingdom. Neither alone is sufficient. The person who has repented and been baptized in Jesus' name but has not yet received the Holy Ghost is not yet fully born again by Christ's own definition. The person who claims to have the Spirit but has not been baptized in Jesus' name is similarly incomplete.

Both are required.

Romans 8:9

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Paul's statement is categorical: without the Spirit, a person does not belong to Christ. This is not an optional upgrade, an advanced stage of Christian experience, or a blessing reserved for the especially consecrated. It is the mark of belonging to Christ. A minister who assures his congregation that they are saved while they have not received the Holy Ghost is — however sincerely — assuring them of something Paul's own words do not support.

5.2 The Evidence: Speaking in Tongues

Acts 2:4

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

The initial reception of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2 was accompanied by speaking in tongues. This is not presented as one possible experience among others. It is what happened. And it is what happened consistently in every New Testament account where the initial reception of the Holy Ghost is described:

- Acts 2 (Pentecost, Jerusalem): 'They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues' (verse 4).
- Acts 10 (Caesarea, the household of Cornelius): 'They heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God' (verse 46). Peter explicitly identifies this tongues-speaking as the evidence that the Gentiles had received the same gift as the Jews at Pentecost (verse 47).
- Acts 19 (Ephesus, disciples of John): 'The Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied' (verse 6). Three independent accounts, in three different cities, among three different populations (Jewish, Gentile, disciples of John), spanning decades of the early church's history. In every instance where Scripture describes what happened when people received the Holy Ghost for the first time, tongues are present and observable. This is not about the ongoing gift of tongues as a spiritual ministry in the body (1 Corinthians 12--14, which addresses a different question entirely). This is about the initial evidence of first reception — the sign that the Spirit has taken up residence. The Spirit was never merely assumed. It was evidenced.

For the Pastor or Minister

A minister who has not himself received the Holy Ghost with the biblical evidence is gently but urgently encouraged to seek that experience before assuring his congregation that they have

received it. This is not a condemnation of sincere ministers. It is a pastoral call to the same apostolic fullness Peter preached on the day the promise was first given.

5.3 The Acts 8 Question: Samaria

Acts 8:14--17

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

The Samaritan account is sometimes cited as evidence that baptism alone is sufficient — that the Holy Ghost is a separate, optional second blessing. This misreads the passage. The Jerusalem apostles did not ignore the situation in Samaria and assume the Samaritans were fine.

They sent Peter and John specifically to address the fact that the Holy Ghost had not yet fallen on any of them. The apostles treated the absence of the Holy Ghost as an incomplete conversion requiring immediate attention.

The Samaritan account does not teach that the Holy Ghost is optional. It teaches the exact opposite: the absence of the Spirit was recognized as an unfinished transaction, and the apostles responded with urgency to complete it.

5.4 Variation in Sequence, Unity in Substance

The New Testament records variation in the sequence of Acts 2:38's elements, which demonstrates that the Spirit is sovereign and does not operate mechanically. But what remains constant in every account is the substance:

- Pentecost (Acts 2): Repentance → Baptism in Jesus' name → Holy Ghost
- Samaria (Acts 8:12-17): Belief and Baptism → Holy Ghost through laying on of apostles' hands
- Caesarea (Acts 10:44-48): The Word heard → Holy Ghost fell → Baptism in Jesus' name followed
- Ephesus (Acts 19:1-6): Rebaptized in Jesus' name → Holy Ghost with tongues The sequence varies. The substance does not. In every case: genuine faith is present, repentance is present, baptism in Jesus' name occurs, and the reception of the Spirit is observable. The Spirit moves sovereignly; the apostles' pattern responds to where the Spirit is and is not. But no one is ever told they have received the Spirit when they have not. The evidence is always expected and recognized.

Chapter Six: Calling on the Name of the Lord

Scripture declares without qualification that 'whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved' (Romans 10:13; Acts 2:21, quoting Joel 2:32). This is among the most beloved salvation texts in Christian tradition, and it is true without qualification. The exegetical question is not whether it is true, but where in the New Testament's own practice we see this performed. The answer is both specific and surprising to many readers.

6.1 The Covenantal Cord

Acts 2:21 quotes Joel 2:32 in the opening of Peter's Pentecost sermon: 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' Peter quotes this passage as the foundation for what he is about to say. The sermon culminates in Acts 2:38 — the specific instructions for how that calling is to be performed. The Joel quotation and the Acts 2:38 answer are not two separate passages; they are the promise and its fulfillment in the same sermon.

The cord that binds them is tightened by Acts 22:16:

Acts 22:16

"Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

In Paul's account of his own conversion, the act of calling on the name of the Lord is performed at baptism. Not before it. Not instead of it.

At it. Baptism in Jesus' name is the covenant action in which the name of the Lord is called upon — the moment at which the internal impulse of faith issues in the external, covenant-defined obedience that unites the believer to the Lord whose name is invoked.

6.2 What 'Calling on the Name' Is NOT

The name of the Lord is not called upon in a sinner's prayer. The name of the Lord is not called upon by asking Jesus into your heart. Both formulas are entirely absent from Scripture. The sinner's prayer emerged as a common evangelical tool in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries — centuries after the apostolic period. No one in Scripture ever prayed a sinner's prayer. No one in Scripture ever asked Jesus into their heart. In Scripture, people who were convicted of sin and asked what to do were told to repent and be baptized in Jesus' name.

This is not a statement about the sincerity of those who have prayed such prayers. Many sincere people have. It is a statement about the sufficiency of the scriptural pattern: the apostolic formula is Acts 2:38, and any substitute — however sincerely offered or received — is a human invention substituted for a divine command.

6.3 Faith Without Works

James 2:17

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

James' warning is directly applicable here. The internal impulse of faith must issue in external, covenant-defined obedience. A faith that believes the gospel to be true but refuses or neglects to obey its terms is a dead faith by

James' own definition. Calling on the name of the Lord is not accomplished by believing that the name is worth calling upon. It is accomplished by the act of calling — in the covenant action God himself appointed: baptism in the name of Jesus Christ. **Chapter Seven: Keeping Salvation — Apostasy, Security, and Endurance** The doctrine of salvation is incomplete without addressing how it is kept. Modern Christianity is broadly divided between those who teach unconditional eternal security (once saved, always saved) and those who teach that salvation can be lost. This chapter does not settle for a position based on which tradition is more comfortable. It assembles what Scripture actually says and allows the evidence to speak.

7.1 The Preservation Texts

Scripture contains genuine assurances of God's preserving power for those who are in Christ. These must be held and taught with full weight:

John 10:27--29

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Philippians 1:6

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

No external force can snatch the believer from God's hand. God, who began the work of salvation, is committed to completing it. The believer's security in Christ is real, and it must be taught as real.

Doubt, fear, and constant insecurity are not the New Testament's desired posture for the redeemed.

7.2 The Apostasy Warnings

The same New Testament that contains the preservation texts also contains a sustained body of apostasy warnings — and these warnings are not addressed to unbelievers. They are addressed to people who have genuinely experienced salvation and are being warned not to abandon it.

They cannot be explained away as merely hypothetical or as addressed to false professors. The text does not support those readings.

Hebrews 6:4--6

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

The description in Hebrews 6:4-5 is not a description of a false professor. It is a description of genuine salvation: enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, partakers of the Holy Ghost, tasted the good word of God. These are the marks of genuine conversion. The warning is that it is possible for such a person to fall away to the point of being unrenowable to repentance.

The full list of apostasy warnings in the New Testament, all addressed to genuine believers:

- Drift away from what was heard — Hebrews 2:1
- Fall away from grace — Galatians 5:4
- Have faith shipwrecked — 1 Timothy 1:19
- Depart from the living God through an unbelieving heart — Hebrews 3:12
- Have one's name taken out of the Book of Life — Revelation 3:5
- Depart from the faith — 1 Timothy 4:1
- Fall away to the point of being unrenowable to repentance — Hebrews 6:4-6

- Return to the pollutions of the world after escaping them — 2 Peter 2:20-21

7.3 Holding Both Truths Together

The correct pastoral position holds both the preservation texts and the apostasy warnings without domesticating either. The believer who is walking with God has genuine security — no one can snatch them from God's hand. The believer who is drifting, growing cold, or entertaining sustained, willful sin has reason for honest self-examination. Both are true simultaneously, and both must be preached.

The key distinction the teacher must maintain is between weakness and willful abandonment. These are not the same condition:

Weakness — 1 John 1:9

'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' The believer who stumbles and repents is not described by Hebrews 6. The pathway of restoration is always open to the genuinely penitent.

Willful Abandonment — Hebrews 10:26--27

'For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment.' The apostasy warnings address those who have made a sustained, conscious, and definitive rejection of the covenant.

7.4 Endurance

Matthew 10:22

"But he that endureth to the end shall be saved."

Christ's statement is not a statement of uncertainty. It is a statement of the shape of the Christian life. Salvation is not merely entered; it is lived out to the end. The parable of the sower (Matthew 13:18-23) presents four kinds of hearers: three receive the word, but only one endures to fruit. Entry into the Kingdom does not guarantee perseverance in it — but the God who began the good work is committed to completing it in those who remain in him.

The Book of Life has not yet been closed. The final judgment of all souls according to their works remains a future event. This is why Paul pressed the churches to self-examination (2 Corinthians 13:5) — not to produce fear, but to produce honesty and diligence. Examine yourselves.

Not obsessively, not with despair, but with the honest sobriety of a person who understands the gravity of what they have entered and the faithfulness of the God who sustains them in it. **Chapter Eight: Pastoral Guardrails — Teaching Salvation with Precision** Ministers are stewards of the gospel, not its editors. The stakes of getting the doctrine of salvation right are not academic; they are eternal. The following guardrails are not preferences. They are the obligations that flow from taking the apostolic standard seriously.

8.1 Never Substitute Formula for Foundation

The sinner's prayer is absent from Scripture. Asking Jesus into your heart is absent from Scripture. Neither practice appears in the book of Acts, in the Epistles, in the Gospels, or anywhere in the New Testament.

Both emerged in human church history long after the apostolic period.

The minister who offers either as the path of salvation is substituting a human invention for an apostolic command — precisely what Christ condemned in Matthew 15:6-9.

The foundation is Acts 2:38. Preach it as Peter preached it. Do not dress it up, soften it, or replace it with something more culturally acceptable. The crowd at Pentecost numbered about three thousand who obeyed on that day

(Acts 2:41). They did not pray a prayer. They repented, were baptized in Jesus' name, and received the Holy Ghost.

8.2 Never Use Grace as a Pretext for Lawlessness

A congregation taught that grace eliminates the obligation to obey will produce the fruit of that teaching. The pastor who assures his people that they are eternally secure regardless of how they live has not preached the grace of the New Testament; he has preached a caricature of it. The grace of God that brings salvation also teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:11-12). Grace that does not produce holiness is not the grace of God — it is a license.

8.3 Never Offer False Assurance to the Unrepentant

False assurance is not pastoral kindness. It is negligence of the most dangerous kind. The minister who assures a congregation member that they are saved when they have not genuinely repented, have not been baptized in Jesus' name, or have not received the Holy Ghost — or who assures someone living in unrepentant sin that they are fine — has not done that soul a favor. He has removed the urgency that the Spirit's conviction was designed to produce.

The pastoral duty is to preach the whole counsel of God, including the apostasy warnings, so that the congregation has the full picture by which to examine themselves honestly. Assurance built on honest self-examination and the objective standard of Scripture is genuine.

Assurance given as a pastoral nicety to avoid difficult conversations is a false peace that Paul explicitly warns against (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

8.4 Never Elevate Church Tradition Above Scripture

Several widely-practiced salvation doctrines entered church tradition long after the apostolic period and have been defended on the grounds of tradition rather than Scripture. Unconditional eternal security was

systematized in the post-Reformation period. The sinner's prayer emerged in the nineteenth century. The use of the triadic formula 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost' as a baptismal formula, in place of the apostolic practice of baptizing in Jesus' name, appears to have developed in the second century.

None of these traditions are defended by two or three scriptural witnesses. All of them replace or contradict practices that are clearly established by the apostolic record. The minister's obligation is to trace every doctrine he teaches to its scriptural foundation and to submit tradition to the same scrutiny.

8.5 Present the Gospel as a Whole

Repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, and the gift of the Holy Ghost are a unit — not a cafeteria from which elements may be selected based on personal preference or theological comfort. The congregant who has repented but has not been baptized in Jesus' name is not yet fully obedient to Acts 2:38. The congregant who has been baptized but has not received the Holy Ghost is not yet born of water and Spirit (John 3:5).

The congregant who has received the Spirit but has not repented has something to resolve.

Present the whole gospel. Preach each element with clarity, with urgency, and with the full weight of the scriptural witness behind it.

Do not allow any element to be treated as optional, as already accomplished by assumption, or as belonging to a different category of Christian experience. The gospel is not negotiable. Present it whole.

Chapter Nine: Objections Examined

9.1 'The Thief on the Cross Was Saved Without Baptism'

OBJECTION:

"The thief on the cross received the promise of paradise from Jesus without being baptized. This proves baptism is not necessary for salvation."

ANSWER: The thief on the cross died under the Old Covenant, before the New Covenant went into legal force. This is not a minor technicality; it is the entire hermeneutical framework.

The New Covenant did not come into legal force until Christ's death (Hebrews 9:17 — 'a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth'). The thief died before the resurrection, before the ascension, and before Pentecost. New Covenant baptism in Jesus' name had not yet been commanded. The Holy Spirit had not yet been given (John 7:38-39 — 'the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified').

The thief on the cross is not the New Covenant model for salvation.

Pentecost is. The question is not what God could do in a unique, pre-Pentecost situation before the New Covenant was inaugurated. The question is what the New Covenant, inaugurated at Pentecost, requires.

And the answer is Acts 2:38.

Additionally, note that the thief went to paradise — not heaven. Under the Old Covenant, sins were covered, not removed (Hebrews 10:4). No covered sin enters heaven. The thief's sins were covered by the covenant under which he died; their final removal awaited the resurrection and the application of the blood of Christ.

9.2 'The Cornelius Account: They Received the Spirit Before Baptism'

OBJECTION:

"Acts 10 shows Cornelius and his household receiving the Holy Ghost before they were baptized. This proves the Holy Ghost is not dependent on baptism."

ANSWER: The Cornelius account is one of the most significant in the New Testament precisely because it is exceptional. The Spirit fell before baptism as a sovereign sign to Peter that Gentiles were included in the promise of salvation — that the covenantal barrier between Jew and Gentile had been removed.

Peter's own interpretation of the event makes this clear: 'Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?' (Acts 10:47). Peter does not say the Spirit's arrival means baptism is unnecessary. He says the Spirit's arrival is the evidence that baptism cannot be refused to them. Even in this exceptional, Spirit-first account, baptism in Jesus' name follows.

The Cornelius account does not establish that the Spirit can be received permanently without baptism. It establishes that the Spirit, who is sovereign, can arrive in a sequence different from the norm — but the full apostolic pattern (repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, Holy Ghost) is still completed. Cornelius was still baptized in Jesus' name. **9.3 'Romans 10:9-13 Teaches Salvation by Confession and Belief Alone'**

OBJECTION:

"Romans 10:9-10 says if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart, you shall be saved. This is the complete formula for salvation — no baptism required."

ANSWER: Romans 10:9-10 is addressed to a community of believers who have already obeyed the gospel. Paul is writing to the church at Rome, encouraging them in the face of

persecution and doubt. He is not providing a new, simpler salvation formula that bypasses Acts 2:38. He is describing the ongoing posture of saving faith for those who have already entered the covenant.

Read the context: Romans is written to people Paul describes as 'called to be saints' (Romans 1:7) — people already in the faith. The Acts/Epistles distinction from Book One applies directly: the Epistles were written to people who had already obeyed the gospel. An epistle's partial reference to salvation cannot override the complete, direct, apostolic answer given in Acts 2:38 to the specific question of what a sinner must do.

Furthermore, notice that Romans 10:13 ('Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved') is the same Joel 2:32 text that Peter quotes in Acts 2:21 — immediately before giving Acts 2:38. The 'calling on the name' of Romans 10:13 is performed, as Acts 22:16 shows, at baptism in Jesus' name.

9.4 'John 3:16 — Whosoever Believeth'

OBJECTION:

"John 3:16 says whosoever believeth in him shall not perish. Belief is the only condition stated. Why add baptism and the Holy Ghost?"

ANSWER: John 3:16 is true and glorious. Belief is the foundational, indispensable condition. But John 3:16 is not a complete salvation checklist any more than a doctor saying 'take the medication' is a complete description of the treatment regimen. It states the foundational requirement without providing the full prescription.

John 3:5 — two verses earlier, in the same conversation with Nicodemus — states: 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into

the kingdom of God.' Christ himself adds the water birth and the Spirit birth in the same conversation as verse 16's faith statement.

The method of Book One demands that both be held together. John 3:16 does not contradict John 3:5; they are complementary witnesses to the same salvation. Genuine belief — the kind that is alive and not dead (James 2:17) — produces the obedience that John 3:5 and Acts 2:38 describe.

Chapter Ten: Key Terms and Technical Reference

10.1 Greek Terms

Metanoeo (μετανοέω) — to repent, to change one's mind and direction — the verb form of metanoia; used in Acts 2:38

Metanoia (μετάνοια) — repentance, the complete reorientation of mind, will, and life away from sin and toward God

Katanyssomai (κατανύσσομαι) — to be pierced through, to be stricken with conviction — used of the Pentecost crowd in Acts 2:37

Eis (εἰς) — into, unto, for the purpose of — the dominant New Testament meaning; the preposition in 'baptized for the remission of sins' (Acts 2:38)

Aphesin hamartion (ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν) — remission of sins, release from the debt and guilt of sin; used in both Matthew 26:28 and Acts 2:38 with identical grammar

Baptizo (βαπτίζω) — to immerse, to dip, to plunge — the Greek word for baptism; the mode of immersion is inherent in the word

Dorea (δωρεά) — gift, free gift — used of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:38; the gift is given, not earned, but still received through the appointed means

Eperotema (ἐπερώτημα) — appeal, pledge, formal response — used of baptism in 1 Peter 3:21; the covenantal response of a good conscience toward God

Hilasmos / Hilasterion (ἱλασμός / ἱλαστήριον) — propitiation, mercy seat — the satisfaction of God's righteous judgment against sin through Christ's blood

Soteria (σωτηρία) — salvation, deliverance, the totality of what God accomplishes for the redeemed — spiritual, physical, eternal

10.2 The Sinner's Prayer: A Historical Note

The practice of the sinner's prayer as a standard pathway to salvation has no basis in the New Testament and no record in the early church. The practice began to emerge in evangelical revivalism of the nineteenth century, particularly associated with Charles Finney's 'anxious bench' practices and later formalized by Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday, and most prominently Billy Graham in the twentieth century. It became so embedded in evangelical culture by the mid-twentieth century that most practitioners are unaware of its recent, non-apostolic origin.

This historical observation is not made to disparage sincere people who have prayed such prayers. God's grace can reach anyone. It is made to establish that the sinner's prayer is a tradition of men, not a commandment of God — and that the doctrine of Book One requires every tradition, however sincerely held, to be submitted to the test of Scripture.

Chapter Eleven: Study Guide and Review Questions

Chapter One — The Scene at Pentecost

1. What is the significance of the question asked by the crowd in Acts 2:37? What makes it the most important question in the New Testament?
2. Why is Acts 2:38 the doctrinal foundation for salvation rather than simply one verse among many?
3. Read Acts 2:39. Who does Peter extend the promise to? What does 'all that are afar off' mean for your own context?
4. (Advanced) What does the word *katanyssomai* tell us about the nature of the crowd's experience in Acts 2:37? What is the difference between conviction and conviction that leads to genuine repentance?

Chapter Two — Repentance

5. What are the three components of genuine repentance? Define each one.
6. What is the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10)? Give an example of each.
7. Why is repentance listed first in Acts 2:38? What does its position tell us about the nature of the salvation transaction?
8. (Advanced) How does the New Testament's use of *metanoia* differ from the Stoic use of the word in Greek philosophy? What does the New Testament add to the concept of 'changing one's mind'?

Chapter Three — Baptism

9. List the nine witnesses to baptism's role in salvation. For each one, identify the author and what specific aspect of baptism it confirms.
10. What are the four images Scripture uses to describe what happens at baptism? Explain each one in your own words.

11. Why is the mode of immersion required by Romans 6:3-4? What imagery makes any other mode inadequate?
12. (Advanced) 1 Peter 3:21 uses the word *eperotema*. What does this Greek word mean? How does it describe baptism as a covenantal act rather than merely a physical ceremony?

Chapter Four — The Greek Word Eis

13. What is the objection based on the Greek word *eis*? State it in your own words.
14. How does the Matthew 26:28 parallel resolve the debate? What is the exact grammatical parallel, and what does it prove?
15. Why is the context of Acts 2:37-38 decisive for understanding the forward-pointing meaning of *eis*?
16. (Advanced) Research the standard uses of *eis* in the New Testament. What is its dominant meaning? How many of its 1,700+ occurrences use the retrospective 'because of' sense? What does this tell you about the burden of proof?

Chapter Five — The Holy Ghost

17. What three New Testament accounts describe the initial reception of the Holy Ghost with tongues? Where, when, and with whom did each one occur?
18. Why does the Acts 8 (Samaria) account actually strengthen rather than weaken the argument for the Holy Ghost's necessity?
19. What does Romans 8:9 say about the relationship between having the Spirit and belonging to Christ?
20. (Advanced) What is the difference between the initial evidence of tongues at first reception and the ongoing gift of tongues in 1 Corinthians 12-14? How do these two categories relate to each other?

Chapter Six — Calling on the Name of the Lord

21. Acts 2:21 quotes Joel 2:32: 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' In Peter's Pentecost sermon, what specific instructions follow this quotation? What does this sequence reveal about how calling on the name is performed?
22. What does Acts 22:16 say Paul was doing when he called on the name of the Lord? What does this tell us about the relationship between baptism and calling on the name?
23. What two popular evangelical formulas does Chapter Six argue are absent from Scripture? What evidence supports this? What does Scripture prescribe in their place?

Chapter Seven — Keeping Salvation

24. List five apostasy warnings from the New Testament. For each one, explain who the warning is addressed to.
25. What is the difference between 'weakness' and 'willful abandonment' in the context of apostasy? Why is this distinction important for pastoral care?
26. How do the preservation texts (John 10:28-29; Philippians 1:6) and the apostasy warnings (Hebrews 6:4-6) fit together? Are they in contradiction?
27. (Advanced) What does Hebrews 6:4-5 describe? Is the person described a genuine believer or a false professor? What is the exegetical evidence for your answer?

Chapter Eight — Pastoral Guardrails

28. Why is the sinner's prayer an inadequate substitute for Acts 2:38? What is the historical origin of the practice?
29. What is false assurance? Give a specific example of how a pastor might offer it and why it is dangerous.

30. What does it mean to 'present the gospel as a whole'? What happens when only part of the gospel is preached?
31. (Advanced) Paul says in Acts 20:26-27 that he is innocent of the blood of all men because he 'shunned not to declare all the counsel of God.' What does this imply about the pastoral responsibility to preach the full gospel, including elements that are controversial or challenging?

A Closing Word: The Gift Still Has Instructions

God has provided a free gift. Not earned. Not deserved. Purchased entirely by the blood of his own Son at a cost so great that no human language can fully measure it. The gift is yours — free, complete, sufficient, and waiting.

But the gift has instructions. Go to repentance. Take up the name of Jesus Christ in baptism. Receive his Spirit. These are not conditions imposed by a reluctant God looking for reasons to withhold. They are the appointed means by which a gracious God has said: this is how you receive what I have freely given.

No one in Scripture said a sinner's prayer. No one asked Jesus into their heart. In Scripture, time after time, people who were convicted of sin and asked what to do were told to obey Acts 2:38. Three thousand on the day of Pentecost. The Samaritans. Paul himself on the Damascus road.

Cornelius and his household. The Ephesian disciples of John. The pattern never changes because the gospel never changes.

Lay Acts 2:38 as your foundation. Build on it. Every Scripture on salvation will line up with it — because they were all written to people who had already obeyed it, as confirmation and elaboration of what they already possessed. No Scripture will contradict another when the whole is held together. They will only appear to contradict when read in pieces, in isolation, stripped from the apostolic context in which they were given.

The gift is free. The instructions are clear. Obey them.

Acts 2:38--39

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Continue to Book Five:

Water Baptism Under the New Covenant